

Remarks

Claims 17-31 are pending in the present application. Claims 17-31 are rejected.

Information Disclosure Statement

In the Office Action, it was initially noted that the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on 8 March 2005 does not comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance of each patent listed that is not in the English language. U.S. Pat. No. 6,780,064 to Abel et al. is the English language equivalent of the German patent reference (DE 10134885.1) cited in that IDS. The '064 patent is cited in the Supplemental IDS submitted herewith. Applicants respectfully request the review and acknowledgment of this U.S. patent reference in the next communication from the Office.

Drawings

Also in the Office Action, Fig. 3 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because it fails to show the communication protocol as described in the specification. FIG. 3 is amended herein - reference numeral "50" has been added which refers to the communication protocol (50) in para. [0044], which is also amended herein. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Specification

The specification was objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. More specifically, the star-topology recited in claim 19 is only disclosed in the Summary of the Invention and not in the Detailed Description. Para. [0028] of the specification (which falls within the Detailed Description) is amended herein such that it recites the following from para. [0011] of the original application text: "[I]n this connection it is, for example, conceivable that the modules are arranged

linearly relative to the central unit. However, it is also for example possible to have a star topology with a central unit at the center." No new matter has been added.

The disclosure was also objected to because of the use of certain undefined acronyms, i.e., CAN in para. [0013]. Paragraph [0013] is amended herein to define CAN as "Controller Area Network". No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request that the objections be withdrawn.

Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Also in the Office Action, claims 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,848,104 to Van Ee et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,204,669 to Dorfe et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,737,319 to Croslin et al., and U.S. Pat. No. 7,216,090 to La Croix. With respect to claims 17 and 20-22, it is asserted in support of the rejection that although Van Ee does not disclose what is included in a triggered event, La Croix expands on the teachings of Van Ee by disclosing a triggered event includes the turning on and/or off of a device (col.14, lines 50-55). The Examiner concluded it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use an on/off power event as a trigger in Van Ee's invention since the change in power consumption would trigger the discovery subsystem to determine a new topology.

Also, where Van Ee does not teach contacting of daisy chained data storing modules, it is asserted Dorfe teaches the contacting data storing modules limitation absent of the teachings of Van Ee by disclosing at least one peripheral communicates with a programmable controller to receive an address assignment (contacting several modules which store data in a memory with a central unit) via daisy chained control lines 18 (col. 5, lines 15-20, 50-60 and Fig. 1). The Examiner concluded it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to contact daisy chained data storing modules in Van Ee's invention to allow the discovery module

to create an accurate topology by gathering information from all devices in an active environment.

Moreover, the Examiner argued that although Van Ee does not teach the transmittal of stored information to a central unit, Croslin teaches the transmittal of stored information absent from the teachings of Van Ee by disclosing network elements that report state information to an audit device (col. 8, lines 17-22), and that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to transmit device information to a central unit in Van Ee's invention as a way to notify a user of a fault in a particular device.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, *inter alia*, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. LaCroix is directed to routing promotion content files to groups of end node devices having the same or similar device attributes (e.g., data storage capacity) called transmission groups. The activation trigger event described at col. 14, lines 50-55 for delivery of a particular promotion (i.e., advertisement) to an end node device and the duration of the promotion can include, *inter alia*, a power event (e.g., OFF/ON). This teaching does not however fulfill the deficiencies of Van Ee as one of skill in the art would not consider a power event in an end node device as an activation trigger event for the type and duration of a promotion to be sent to the end node device as relevant to the present invention. Van Ee and LaCroix, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a method for determining the topology of modules in a modular analytical system comprising, *inter alia*, interrupting a contact of a module to the central unit, transmitting the stored data of the modules to the central unit, restoring the interrupted contact, and comparing the data that were transmitted before the contact was interrupted with the data that were transmitted after interruption of the contact and determining the topology of the modular analytical system on the basis of the comparison. Van Ee and/or LaCroix simply don't do this and therefore cannot be relied upon in support of the instant rejection.

Claims 18-24 each depend from independent claim 17 and, therefore, contain all of the limitations of that claim. Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Also in the Office Action, claims 25 and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,204,669 to Dorfe et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,848,104 to Van Ee et al. Although Dorfe does not teach the calculation of topology information, it is asserted that Van Ee teaches the topology calculation absent the teachings of Dorfe by disclosing environmental devices in an active environment can also become "not discovered" (col. 18, lines 58-63), and it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to calculate topology information in Dorfe's invention to determine if a node had faulted.

As noted above, in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. Claim 25 is directed to a modular analytical system comprising, *inter alia*, a computing unit to calculate the topology of the analytical system on the basis of a comparison of data that were registered before interrupting a contact between the central unit and a module with data that were registered after interruption of the contact. In contrast, Van Ee teaches a discovery function which returns a determination of availability or lack thereof of environmental devices. Van Ee does not teach a computing unit that calculates the topology of an analytical system, but a tasking software system which provides for disabling or otherwise rendering irrelevant any objects associated with an environmental device, so that the objects neither confront the user nor consume the limited dimensions of the screen.

Claims 26-31 each depend from independent claim 25 and, therefore, contain all of the limitations of that claim. Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants have filed a complete response to the outstanding Office Action and respectfully submit that, in view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve efficiently any formal matters or to discuss any aspects of the application or of this response. Otherwise, early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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